



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 9, 2015

Contact: Lorenza Munoz, 213-458-6279

Email: lmunoz@bos.lacounty.gov

Contact: Christina Villacorte, 213-447-1277

Email: cvillacorte@bos.lacounty.gov

Improving Medical Services for Inmates

Hoping to improve the medical services provided to jail inmates, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors voted to shift the responsibility from the Sheriff's Department to the Department of Health Services.

The county currently allocates approximately \$330 million and over 2,000 positions per year on health, mental health, and public health services to the roughly 17,500 inmates housed in county jails. Of this amount, \$238 million and more than 1,700 budgeted positions are allocated to the Sheriff's Medical Services Bureau (MSB). Los Angeles County is the only county in California in which the Sheriff's Department runs its own health care system.

"We must provide county inmates with humane and medically sound treatment," said Supervisor Ridley-Thomas. "Los Angeles County cannot continue to bring subpar medical attention to those in our custody. Practically everyone who is an expert on this matter agrees that we can no longer continue in this manner. We simply must do better."

A single, integrated jail health services would emphasize primary and preventive care, build substance abuse services, enhance jail mental health, improve recruitment, retention and training of qualified staff, enhance discharge and reentry planning.

In addition, the Board will receive a report by early fall on any anticipated savings, if any, that will come through the new model and how those funds could be used to enhance services.

#